(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) and (b) Reports in the media attributing a statement on the nature of the Pokhran test of 1974 to a former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission have come to the notice of the Government. The Government reiterates that the Pokhran test of 1974 was a peaceful nuclear explosion experiment. While a nuclear weapon test and a peaceful nuclear explosion experiment use devices designed on the basis of the same physics principles, the packaging and detonation methodologies are different.

Killing of Myanmarese Security Personnel

938. SHRI YEERA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the incident in which four Myanmarese security personnel were killed at Moreh-Tamu border on October 12, 1997;

(b) Whether Myanmar authorities have protested over the incident and demanded talks between Governor of Sagain and Chief Minister of Manipur; and

(c) Whether such talks have taken place; if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) to (c) In an incident on the night of 11th and 12th October, 1997 a group of armed miscreants set on fire the Namphalong market place at Tamu on the Myanmar side of the Indo-Myanmar border, opposite Moreh in Manipur.

Government of Myanmar have expressed deep concern over the incident of 12th October, 97 stating that Kuki insurgents were involved in the incident and that they entered Myanmar from Moreh and later returned to the Indian territory. According to the Government of Myanmar, two market security personnel and one immigration official were injured and 365 shops were burnt down and destroyed. Government of India have also seen reports that the so-called Kuki National Army has claimed responsibility for the incident.

The Myanmar officials had initially suggested a meeting between the Divisional Chairman of law and Order Restoration Council of Sagaing Division of Myanmar and Chief Minister of Manipur. After further consultations, a meeting was held on October 15 between the Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, Chandel District of Manipur on the Indian side and Chairman, District Law and Order Restoration Council on the Myanmar side. During the meeting, the Myanmar delegation requested the Indian side to identify the culprits for taking further necessary action against them.

The State Government of Manipur have instructed the district authorities to investigate the case so as to bring the culprits to book if they are on the Indian soil and to ensure maintenance of peace and tranquility in the area.

Government of India are committed to ensuring that there is peace and normalcy and that border trade between India and Myanmar is allowed to continue uninterrupted.

Improvement in relations between India and Pakistan

939. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the next round of Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan are scheduled to be held in December, 1997;

(b) if so, the issues proposed to be taken up; and

(c) the progress made so far in improvement of relations between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) to (c) The third round of the resumed Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan, held in New Delhi from 15—18 September, 1997, was adjourned, with the two sides deciding to reconvene at mutually convenient dates. No dates have been fixed for the reconvened meeting of the Foreign Secretaries.

At their meeting in Islamabad in June 1997, the Foreign Secretaries identified eight subjects, viz (a) Peace and Security, including CBMs; (b) Jammu and Kashmir; (c) Siachen; (d) Tulbul Navigation Project; (e) Sir Creek; (f) Terrorism and drug trafficking; (g) Economic and Commercial Cooperation; (h) Promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields; for discussions between the two countries. They had also decided that a mechanism would be set up to address these issues in an integrated manner and that the Foreign Secretaries would directly address the issues of Peace & Security including CBMs and Jammu & Kashmir, and coordinate and monitor discussions on other identified subjects. The Foreign Secretaries would continue their discussions on these modalities of the dialogue when they meet next.

Dialogue between the two countries, at the highest political level, has resumed with the two Prime Ministers meeting in may, September and October 1997, which is significant in itself. During these meetings, our desire to establish a relationship to trust, friendship and cooperation was reiterated, while at the same time, our serious concern regarding Pakistani activities which impinge adversely on our security and national interest was conveyed.

The hotline communication between the two Prime Ministers has been revived. Fishermen in the custody of the two countries have been released, and the remaining, as soon identified, would also be released. To Promote people-to-people contacts and encourage interaction between academicians, journalists, schemes, businessmen of the two countries, a number of steps have been taken by us to liberalise the visa regime.

During the discussions with Pakistan,f we have conveyed our desire to develop a wide-ranging mutually beneficial relationship covering economic, trade, cultural, people-to-people contact and other functional areas.

Demands made by Global Organisation of people of Indian origin

940. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a press conference held by the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin at New Delhi on August 31, 1997 in which the Organisation called upon Government to give them official recognition as it was done in China and to help them reverse the brain drain;

(b) if so, what were the main observations and demands made by them; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto and the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main demands made by the GOPIO are:

(i) that the Government should give them official recognition;

(ii) that the Government should organise an international conference for their benefit;

(iii) that the Government should start a center for overseas Indians in New Delhi;

(c) Globally there are a number of organisations of overseas Indians.